*Qualitative Research is intended to explore social phenomena by immersing the investigator in the situation for extended periods.*

**The six characteristics of qualitative research.**

1. Use the **natural setting** as the direct source of data and the researcher as the key Instrument.

* Qual. Researchers believe that human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs. So whenever possible, spend significant time there.

1. Research is **descriptive**.

* They pay close attention to the details of the environment and to the assumptions under which they operate.

1. Research is concerned with the **process rather than simply with outcomes or products**.

* How is an intervention implemented? How are labels applied to students?

1. Includes **analysis of data**.

* Doing qualitative research involves planning to use part f the study to learn what the important questions are. It is not assumed you know enough to before beginning the research.

1. Meaning is **subjective**.

* By learning the perspective of the participants, qualitative research illuminates the inner dynamics of the situation. Researchers are concerned with making sure they capture these perspectives accurately by asking *THEY* interpret things, and *THEIR* perspectives.

1. Researcher is aware of their **subjective perspective**

* By recognizing the importance of context and perspective, researchers must examine their own perceptions and beliefs continuously throughout the research.

**There are six steps you must follow to complete your qualitative research.**

1). Identify what you intend to study.

* Be specific. Example: Perceived understanding of being an intern.

2). Identify whom you will study.

* Will you be observing a fifth grade class or a ninth grade English class?

3). Collect data

* Naturalistic observation: http://www.ucc.ie/hfrg/projects/respect/urmethods/natural.htm
* Open ended interviews
* Field Notes
* Documents or Photographs
* Statistics!
* **BE SURE AN INCLUDE METHODS OF TRIANGULATION,** using different lenses on the same phenomenon to support your conclusion.

4). Analyze Data:

* Begin data analysis shortly after data collection, this is an ongoing process. Look for similarities and patterns to identify trends and themes to categorize data.

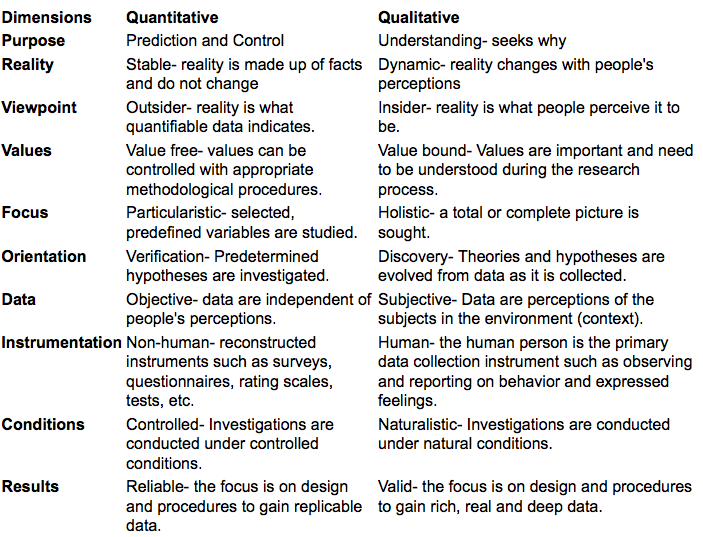
5). Generate Hypotheses:

* Hypothesis emerge from the analysis of the data as it is collected

6). Make Interpretations and Conclusions

* Acknowledge your potential bias, remove yourself for a short period of time and then reevaluate the data.

*Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative:* Qualitative research is focused on depth of knowledge, while Quantitative research is focused on generalizability of results.



The chart above comes from "Understanding and conducting qualitative research" by Stainback and Stainback (1988, p. 8-9). http://gse.gmu.edu/research/tr/tr\_comparison/